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who claimed that the alleged oppression of Indian women in the zenana demanded British amelioration through social-reform measures.

Unfortunately, Ghose's suggestive analysis seems frozen in the early 1990s. Two examples are illustrative. First, her plea that 'what needs to be looked at in more depth is how notions of gender were bound up with hegemonic ideologies, and how women were both made an instrument of, and were complicitous with, the politics of imperialism' (p. 4) ignores critiques such as those of Antoinette Burton in *Burdens of History* (1994; rev. *ante*, xviii [1996], 160) and in 'Fearful Bodies into Disciplined Subjects', *Signs*, xx (1995), which focuses on Carpenter. Second, Ghose lumps together as travellers women who toured India for six months with others (Parks and Eden) who lived in India for several years. This imprecision has at least two consequences. First, the impact of length of stay on experiences, frustrations, and ultimately representations of India as space and as society is ignored. Moreover, a woman's age and place in her life cycle are not considered as factors influencing experiences or representations. Second, there is only minimal engagement with scholarship on travel and tourism during the nineteenth century which debates qualitative and quantitative differences between the two.

Still, Ghose's arguments and evidence for the plurality of women's gazes and the complex nature of power produces a clearer understanding of how race, class, and gender are imbricated in the tangled web of British imperialism in India.

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RITA S. KRANIDIS. *The Victorian Spinster and Colonial Emigration: Contested Subjects*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1999. Pp. x, 228. \$45.00 (US).

DESPITE THE INTEREST of Victorian feminists in the experiences of single women and their demographic significance, scholars have devoted more attention to the experiences of wives and mothers. There has been no major study of single women since Martha Vicinus's *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920* (1985), and no substantive study of single-women colonists since James Hammerton's *Emigrant Gentlewomen* (1979). Rita S. Kranidis's revisionist study bridges these two cultural subjects with the aid of theories of postcolonialism, commodification, and spectacle.

Single women presented a vexing problem to Victorians, one that could potentially be solved, like other social concerns such as crime and poverty, through export. The number of spinsters doubled between 1851 and 1861. Especially within the middle class, with its narrowly circumscribed range of respectable employment possibilities, such women seemed, in the famous Victorian phrase, 'redundant', a national threat because they endlessly consumed, yet were unproductive. Encouraged by immigration societies, thousands of women left Britain. Of those who emigrated in the second half of the nineteenth century to the United

States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Cape of Good Hope, 40 per cent were single women.

Through fairly equal attention to census statistics, press clippings from the Fawcett Library, and nineteenth-century periodicals, on one hand, and on the other, emigrant women, loosely defined, in Victorian novels (for example, in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, even Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*), Kranidis challenges some traditional interpretations. She contends that there has been disproportionate emphasis on 'distressed gentlewomen'. Most emigrants were working class, but the middle class received more attention because their exportation was complicated and delicate. She counters the argument, too, that emigration was an answer to female unemployment, factually, by suggesting that most single women emigrants considered to be past the age of marriage were employable at home as domestic servants, and ideologically, by repudiating the value judgement 'that certain people are numerically excessive' (p. 26). The surplus of women, Kranidis contends, was not material, but symbolic in the Victorian cultural hegemony. Sending women abroad required redefining the colonial culture as an infantile 'empty landscape' and recasting the useless spinster, an infinitely plastic commodity, as a maternal figure who could be 'a natural extension of England as empire and as mother to the colonies' (p. 94). She might ultimately surface as a 'resisting commodit[y]' (p. 135).

Some of this interpretation presents historical problems. For example, Kranidis asserts that the Female Middle-Class Emigration Society was trying 'to construct a new class and gender category' (p. 30) when it gave preference to emigrants who were both educated and had a knowledge of housework. While Kranidis assumes that no woman could combine both requirements, it is plausible that many could, including women who were relative newcomers to the middle class, who had no servants (or only a maid-of-all-work), or who followed the oft-quoted advice of Mrs Beeton that the employers of servants should know how to do all the tasks they asked others to perform. The ideal woman was leisured and assisted by servants, but this was scarcely the reality, as Patricia Branca has amply illustrated.

Similarly, while Kranidis's desire to overcome the polarization of the nation and empire is admirable, it is not always possible to ignore national differences. Colonists may well have sought higher status and wages for themselves abroad (or at least the illusion of it for friends and family). But it is less convincing that all or most imperialists aspired to a cultural authority comparable to the memsahib, regardless of their destinations. Perceptions of race, language, tradition, not to mention historical experience of settlement or conquest, in countries as different as Canada, India, and Australia are factors which Kranidis underestimates. Her sources – press accounts and printed tracts such as Maria Rye's pamphlet, *Emigration of Educated Women* (1861) – may, as propagandistic devices, display a deceiving uniformity among the colonies, and novels may give all colonies an

'ethereality' which allows 'Elsewhere' to 'be construed in various and infinite ways' (p. 128), for reasons that have nothing to do with the perception of specific colonies at the time of writing. It would be interesting to see if the emigrant letters and shipboard diaries Kranidis quotes from other scholarly monographs are devoid of such distinctions. Within these limitations, Kranidis offers a theoretically complex and imaginative view of the spinster, her cultural 'map', and her 'journey' to the colonies.

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ROBERT B. EDGERTON. *Death or Glory: The Legacy of the Crimean War*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1999. Pp. ix, 288. \$30.00 (US).

THIS IS AN angry book, full of indignation at the class system and the 'Butcher's bill' (p. 5) for war. It contains no new information, being entirely derived from secondary sources, and it is avowedly the work of an anthropologist, not an historian. At times it reads like the work of an investigative journalist determined to reveal the general rottenness. W. H. Russell, of course, did so very effectively at the time. Robert B. Edgerton is fond of making comparisons with the American Civil War and it is interesting to note in passing that, although Russell had succeeded in revealing the horrors of the Crimean War (and of the Indian Mutiny), he was excluded from reporting the American war after he had described the indiscipline of the Northerners at the battle of Bull Run.

Edgerton's understanding of the historical context does not seem altogether secure. Few historians would believe that Austria became stronger as a result of the Crimean War. His comment – presumably intended to establish the technological disparity between the contestants – that by 1853 the Western states had replaced sail by steam is not true. Until the invention of the triple marine engine, sail still had an advantage over steam. Stereotypes are too easily accepted, for example, on anti-Catholicism. Irish troops included Ulstermen as well as southern Catholics. Florence Nightingale was not generally anti-Catholic: her fire was directed at one particular nun, Mother Frances Bridgeman, whom she saw as trying to usurp her authority. She got on well with the Bermondsey nuns.

It is an open question whether the Crimean War was the 'most tragically botched' war in modern European history, as the publisher's blurb asserts. It may be that we know more about it. A surprising number of quite ordinary men left first-hand accounts and, in recent years, we have even learnt about the experiences of the Jamaican nurse, Mary Seacole, who was as remarkable a figure in her way as Nightingale.

War has always been a messy business, down to recent events in Kosovo. It is easy to define objectives, harder to control results. Bad luck as well as bad generalship play their parts. The Crimean campaign was started too late in the season but the weather was unusually bad. Anyone who has sailed into Yalta knows that it